

ART
N
742
S5
A53
1963

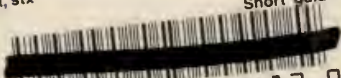
Please
handle this volume
with care.

The University of Connecticut
Libraries, Storrs

art, stx

N 742.S5A53 1963

Short guide :




3 9153 00500683 0

ART/N/742/S5/A53/1963



FIFTY MASTERPIECES
IN THE RINGLING MUSEUM OF ART



Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2012 with funding from
LYRASIS Members and Sloan Foundation

<http://archive.org/details/shortguid00john>

A SHORT GUIDE
50 MASTERPIECES

in the

JOHN AND MABLE RINGLING
MUSEUM OF ART
SARASOTA, FLORIDA

Insofar as possible, pictures have been described in this guide in the order in which they are encountered in the galleries.

A brief survey of European paintings from the 14th to the 18th centuries (the periods represented here) will be found at the end of this guide.

Cover: Fra Bartolomeo, *Holy Family*
See page 8.

Published By

RINGLING MUSEUM OF ART

APRIL, 1953

REPRINT APRIL, 1955

REPRINT JUNE, 1957

REPRINT APRIL, 1959

REVISED EDITION FEBRUARY, 1961

REPRINT MARCH, 1962

REVISED EDITION MARCH, 1963

The Four Rubens Cartoons

(Cat. Nos. 211, 212, 213 and 214)

by PETER PAUL RUBENS and assistants *Flemish School*, 1577-1640



RUBENS, perhaps the greatest and certainly the most typical of Baroque artists, painted these pictures about 1625-28, at the peak of his career. They were ordered by one of his royal patrons, the Infanta Isabella Clara Eugenia, Governess of the Netherlands and sister of the King of Spain. She gave him a handful of pearls in part payment. The set consisted of eleven large paintings, of which five are now lost and two are in the notable Rubens collection of the museum at Valenciennes, France. Their purpose was to serve as full-scale models (“cartoons”) for tapestry weavers in Brussels because the Infanta wished to present a set of tapestries to a convent in Madrid where they still are. The weavers kept the cartoons and later other tapestries were woven, two of which are in the Museum. Some of the cartoons were taken to Spain in 1648, but were sold about 1808, and these four were bought by the first Marquess of Westminster in 1818 for his gallery in London. From the Duke of Westminster, his descendant, they were purchased by John Ringling, and are among the most important paintings in his collection. They are exhibited in the large gallery especially designed to receive them.

The largest (Cat. No. 212, *Illustrated*), hanging on the north wall, depicts a passage from Genesis which tells of the meeting of Abraham and Melchizedek, when the King of Salem offered the patriarch bread and wine, later to become symbols of the sacrament. The picture’s vast scale is typical of much of the painting of the 17th century, a period in art history known as the Baroque. The religious fervor of the Counter-Reformation, which inspired Rubens and his times, becomes the dominant theme of the four compositions in the Ringling Collection.

Rubens was a very prolific painter, who made hundreds of sketches and many larger compositions derived from them. The original designs for these huge canvases

are clearly from his own hand. A number of them still exist. But the cartoons themselves must have been achieved, for the most part, with the participation of assistants in his Antwerp workshop. However, the finishing touches were, no doubt, applied by the master himself.

Notice the seemingly effortless manner in which the large areas are peopled with monumental figures and decorative accessories. See the glowing colors, the freedom with which Rubens intertwined one figure with another in swirling movements, the manner in which the figures move freely in and out of the picture space, and the way in which that three-dimensional space is realized. All of these qualities are characteristic of Baroque painting in general, a style which for the first time thoroughly exploited the possibilities of large figure compositions, or energetic movement made clear through the use of powerful diagonals and the turning of the forms on their own axes to create a churning spiral excitement. The whole effect is almost as if these personages had been frozen momentarily in attitudes that will be transformed into others while we watch.

In *The Fathers of the Church* (Cat. No. 214), the still life of the books, pens and lamp seen below serves to remind us that, with these scholarly implements, the Fathers had defended the dogma of the Eucharist. Saint Clara's features are clearly those of the Infanta herself, a compliment paid by Rubens to his patron, who had commissioned the whole series. The Ringling Museum, in effect, thus possesses two portraits (see also Cat. No. 217) of that renowned Governess of the Netherlands, as well as a portrait of her nephew, the Cardinal-Infante Ferdinand.

The Four Evangelists (Cat. No. 213) are seen attended by their apocalyptic symbols: the lion with Saint Mark, the ox with Saint Luke, the angel with Saint Matthew, and the eagle above Saint John, who holds the chalice. In this composition, as in the two previous ones, cupids or *putti* support rich garlands of fruit and draperies above the figures, as though they had just raised a curtain to reveal, as on stage, the dramatic scenes of the triumph of the Eucharist.

The fourth cartoon shows the *Israelites Gathering Manna in the Desert* (Cat. No. 214), with Moses standing at the right, a rod in one hand, the other raised as if to summon the miraculous substance from heaven. Here the brilliant vermilion of Rubens' palette enliven the swirling and bending tensions of the powerful figures framed and echoed by the twisting Baroque columns.

The Virgin And Child Adored By Angels

(Cat. No. 7)

by MARIOTTO DI NARDO *Florentine School, active 1394-1424*

FOURTEENTH century Florentine painting was dominated by the figure of Giotto, sometimes called the father of painting. Giotto, active during the first half of the century, departed from Byzantine tradition of line and flat tone—a sort of hieratic picture writing to describe the holy figures, which at that time were the sole subject matter for the painter. Giotto's departure from that tradition was the turning point in the history of Western art. He sought to create figures with three-dimensional verity, which would give to the spectator a visual understanding of their weights and volumes. To create this new sense of depth, he gave up the use of gold which characterized the rich flat pictures painted under Byzantine influence. His comparatively realistic figures reflected the sculptured ones created by the Pisano family, whose art, in turn, looked back to Roman sculpture for its inspiration. With the Pisani, as with Giotto, the Virgin appears to be the reincarnation of a Roman matron.

Giotto's followers were numerous in Florence, as elsewhere in Italy, during the second half of the 14th century. For the most part, they failed entirely to comprehend the revolutionary changes implied in the art of their master, and contented themselves with superficially aping his mannerisms. Often, too, they were susceptible to the influence of Siena, a city to the south of Florence which at the time was witnessing the dying manifestations of the Byzantine tradition. The Siennese masters used agreeable and decorative color, and invested their figures with considerable charm. Though still formed within the outlines of the abstract Byzantine mode, the Siennese figures drew new life from a more gracefully sinuous line.

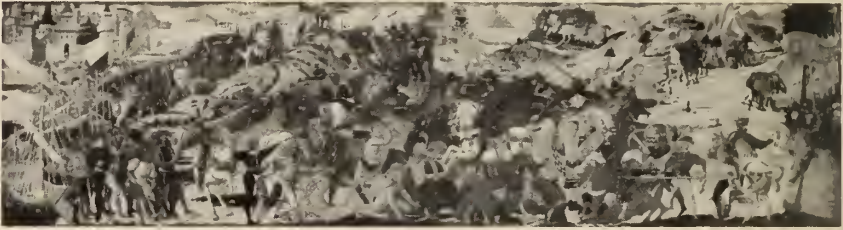
The Florentine painter, Mariotto di Nardo, working as late as the first quarter of the 15th century, reflects both the Siennese and the Giottesque traditions, and in a sense unites them. The attractive color, the swirling lines of the drapery, and the gracious inclination of the head of the Madonna derive from the established formulas of Siennese art. The attempt to give to the Madonna a certain monumental dignity, and to suggest the modeling of the form, betrays the heritage from Giotto.



A Battle Scene Between Romans And Gauls

(Cat. No. 13)

by APOLLONIO DI GIOVANNI (?) *Florentine School, Middle 15th Century*



THIS picture, painted on a wood panel, can be attributed to an unidentified artist of the middle 15th century who painted decorative pictures of similar type in the largest Florentine workshop devoted to such decorative productions. A number of other paintings, including two more in the Ringling Collection (Cat. Nos. 12 and 14), have been attributed to his hand. Such narrow horizontal compositions served to decorate the *cassoni*, or wedding chests, popular in the period. The painter's preference for battle scenes, which had been favored by Roman relief sculptors of classical times, shows his acceptance of the new Renaissance motifs, revived from the past. But his introduction of numerous small figures, richly costumed, and often mounted on gaily caparisoned horses, suggests his dependence on the decorative formulas of the late Gothic International style of miniature painting in which gold accents were introduced to enhance the rich effects.

In 1949, this panel (with Cat. No. 14) was sent to Florence, Italy, at the request of that city, to be shown in an important exhibition in honor of the five hundredth anniversary of the birth of Lorenzo de' Medici, the great patron of the arts at the time of its execution.

The Building Of A Palace

(Cat. No. 22)

by PIERO DI COSIMO *Florentine School*, 1462-1521



OF all late 15th century Florentine painters, Piero di Cosimo was one of the few gifted with a sense of humor. Apart from its intrinsic beauty and documentary interest as an illustration of the building procedures of that day, there is to be noted in this painting the disarming wit of the busy figures at their various pursuits. The 15th century's interest in science is reflected in the correct rendering of the perspective, and the artist's almost naive pride in his knowledge of its laws. Figures become smaller as they recede into the distance; parallel lines converge at the so-called vanishing point—here, the central pivot of the composition. The foreshortened stone figure of the child in the left foreground is yet another indication of the passionate interest of the Renaissance mind in transcribing visual reality to the painted surface.

The Italian Renaissance was an age of inquiry into the significance of man and his works. Its birthplace was Florence, where all the arts began then to blossom, nourished by intellectuals, and patronized by wealthy princes, bankers and merchants. Renaissance means rebirth: the rebirth (so its proponents contended) of classical antiquity, of the glories of Greece and Rome, the age-old heritage of the Mediterranean. Furthermore, the movement developed in reaction to the Gothic styles of the North, which had been imported into, and in a sense foisted on, Italy during the 13th and 14th centuries.

That northern concept, called by Italians *lo stile tedesco* or style of the barbarians, was opposed in every way to the inherited classical ways of thinking. It was irrational, without repose or geometric harmony, and ill-suited to a land still dotted with the ruins of the Roman builders. The Gothic style, in a deeply mystical period, had emphasized the glory of God as the center of man's universe, and the relatively unimportant place of man, His anonymous and regimented servant. The Renaissance brought rational man once again to the center of the stage. He emerged once more as an individual, deeply engrossed in the way he looked, the way he moved, what he thought about, and how he felt. Renaissance art inevitably embodied these concepts, and Piero di Cosimo's *Building of a Palace* shows this concern with the creative pursuits of man.

The Holy Family With The Infant St. John The Baptist

(Cat. No. 26)

by FRA BARTOLOMEO DELLA PORTA *Florentine School, 1472-1517*



FRA Bartolomeo, leading Florentine master of the classic style at the turn of the 15th century, is represented in the Ringling Collection by a gracious tondo (composition within a circle), a favorite device of the Renaissance artist. The formal balance of the high Renaissance design determines the placing of the Virgin and the St. Joseph on either side of a central axis, here occupied by a quiescent, luminous landscape seen beyond. The Virgin herself, in this period, is easily understandable in human terms. Here she is a mother, rather than the symbol of celestial majesty as in the earlier pictures.

A goldfinch appears in the foreground. It is so often seen in Italian paintings depicting the Christ that Italian tradition still calls it "the beloved bird of Jesus." The goldfinch has, indeed, various symbolic meanings. It may stand for the resurrection, as it seems to do here. Near the bird, below a tiny gold cross, an inscription may be observed: ORATE P PICTORE—Intercede for the painter.

The Virgin And Child Enthroned

(Cat. No. 28)

by DOMENICO PULIGO *Florentine School, 1492-1527*



THE formal, balanced, pyramidal composition of many High Renaissance altarpieces is preserved in this painting of the Virgin and Child attended by two martyr saints—St. Quentin (holding two spits in his left hand as symbol of his impalement) and St. Placidus. The influence of Puligo's master, Andrea del Sarto, is seen in the harmonious coloring and melting forms, which are also reminiscent of the dissolving contours of Leonardo da Vinci's figures. In fact, these forms appear to have disintegrated even further than Leonardo's. To some, Puligo's figures may seem over-ripe, weak and without substance. Yet, though sentiment has yielded to sentimentality, this picture is not without a certain poetic charm, and has at least the elegance of approaching decadence.

The Medici Madonna

(Cat. No. 34)

by BENEDETTO PAGNI DA PESCIA *Tuscan School*, known works 1525-32



THIS is a remarkable painting in various ways; there are few others in the Museum of which it can so truly be said, no other museum has anything like it. It is the most important work painted by the little known artist, a fact already noticed when it was new. In his famous *Lives of the Artists* (1568) Vasari describes it in detail, praising its "beautiful and gracious theme." He does not give similar notice to any other individual picture by Pagni, who spent most of his known career as an assistant to others.

The theme also is found in no other painting. It is a political document, to which Vasari's description gives the clue. The City of Florence on the right is presenting to Mary and the Child the honors won by the great Medici family. These include its two popes, Leo X (1513-1521) and Clement VII, (1523-1534) the Cardinal Ippolito, named to that honor in 1529, and two Dukes, who are probably the Duke of Urbino (1492-1519) and the first Duke of Florence (1510-1537). Three Medici had been Dukes, but the third had a foreign title and may have been excluded for that reason. In Florence itself the family had ruled without having any titles of nobility for a hundred years. The naming of a duke in 1530 is an example of the tendency in this period away from democracy toward rigid aristocratic social forms.

The style of the painting is also unusual and striking, with distortions of natural form, making the figures long and thin. This was certainly intentional (Pagni has based his shapes on those recently developed by the famous Parmigianino) and not due to lack of skill. Proof is the expert treatment of details like the ear. Instead, the artist's idea was to make the figure elegant; tall slender figure types have in fact been in high fashion in many ages including our own. Thus the artist is able to use even his shapes to present his subject, for Mary is considered as a feudal lady receiving homage, so that the slant of the painting is aristocratic.

The Holy Family With A Donor

(Cat. No. 41)

by GAUDENZIO FERRARI *North Italian School*, c. 1480-1546



WHEN Gaudenzio Ferrari started to work, he was clearly the best painter who had ever appeared in his section of Italy, now known as the province of Piedmont, and his reputation has never diminished. This panel has been recognized for more than half a century as one of his finest works. In a book about the artist published in England in 1908, it was used as the frontispiece. In 1926, Adolfo Venturi in his basic, many-volumed history of Italian art singled it out in a paragraph for its "enchancing color, and for the arched line of the background which ties in with the grace of the figures and softness of color." A German book on the artist in 1927 points out that it is one of the few in which landscape is exploited. More

recently, it was borrowed for a commemorative exhibition in Italy in 1956, from which a reviewer singled it out as one of the most precious objects on exhibit, produced in his best years. Other writers have added that it is the source of many copies. A practically identical painting belonged to the kings of France in the 18th century, but it has disappeared and some have thought it was this same painting. That would certainly fit in with its quality and admiration, but slight differences indicate that two similar pictures are involved instead.

The subject is the favorite one of the Holy Family with angels, and the kneeling figure of the man who ordered the painting is commonly included in this period. He is a cardinal (with red cape) who is also a Bishop (with miter), but his identity is not known.

The presentation is not typical of the artist's best known work. He usually exploits intricate movement, twisted folds, and stripes of shadow, as he does in the angel in the foreground here. This painting is exceptionally calm, balanced, bright and open. It may illustrate his admiration for the more classic artists of central Italy like Perugino, and it certainly makes it an even finer illustration of the art of the Renaissance.

Portrait Of Mario Benvenuti

(Cat. No. 106)

by GIOVANNI BATTISTA MORONI *North Italian School*, about 1525-1578



THIS artist passed his life in the mountain town of Bergamo, and specialized in portraits more than any other Italian artist of his time. His subjects are well-to-do citizens, the landowners, civic and religious leaders of the city, none of them famous. Mario Benvenuti is unknown except for the inscription on his portrait, which tells us in Latin that he was an officer under the Emperor Charles V—sub Carolo V Imperatore Dux. The word “dux” does not refer to any particular rank of officer. The last wars of Charles V ended in 1552, when Benvenuti must have been quite a young man, so that he probably was not of high rank.

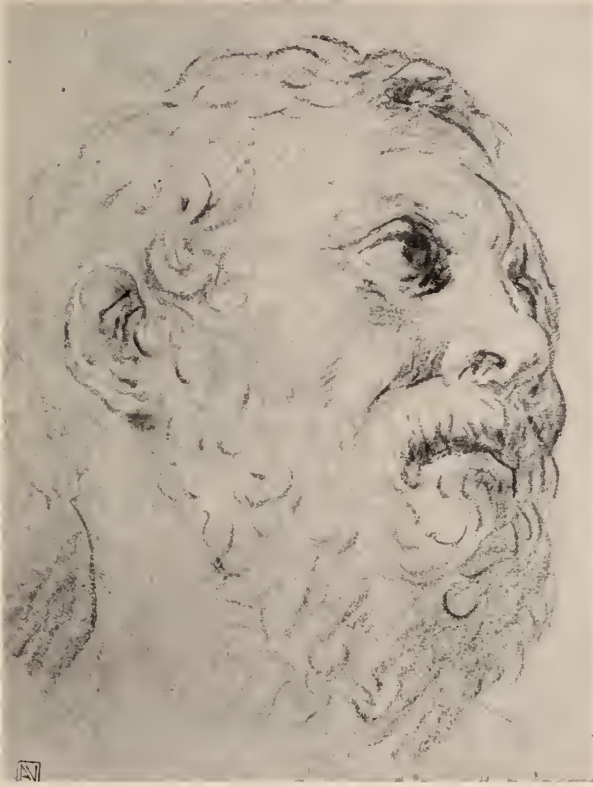
The portraits of Moroni are all of equally high quality. He is steady rather than excited. He is a craftsman, presenting beautifully turned and polished paintings. The people in them, socially speaking, are well-bred, distinguished and reserved, the well-born or successful leaders of an unchanging province. Where Moroni rises above the demands on him is in the delicate refinement of his colors, related to each other with the most exact balance, to produce a flowing whole. In this way he uses technique which conveys the mood of his chosen theme.

The portraits vary slightly from each other. This one belongs with a group painted around 1560. A full length portrait in the National Gallery, London, shows the same arrangements, with the hand resting on a helmet placed on a column, and the broken niche with the sky. The same left hand is seen in another of 1560, still owned by a family in Bergamo. But where Mario Benvenuti's portrait differs is that out of about a hundred and twenty-five existing portraits by Moroni, his is the only one in armor. This fact does not have mere rarity value, but is artistically important, since the artist uses the special deep glow of the metal as the basis for his color design. In this way the Ringling portrait is unique.

A token of the admiration for it is that, when the greatest exhibition of Moroni was held in Italy in 1953, it was one of twenty-five portraits presented, and a photograph was taken by the chief Italian art photograph firm, which continues to be sold there.

St. Damian, After Michelangelo

by TINTORETTO *Venetian School, 1518-1592*



TINTORETTO, one of the world's great artists, grew up in Venice just at the right moment. For it was then the most lively center anywhere for new ideas in painting, especially about color. Tintoretto played an important part in this activity, but he was less exclusively a colorist than his friends, and had a strong sense of the importance of solid, sculptural modelling. This is why he constantly did drawings of the human head and body, now nearly all in museums, and insisted that his students do the same. It is typical that many of his drawings are studies after sculpture, especially ancient Roman works and those by the great sculptors of his time in Florence.

In most cases many drawings from the same sculpture exist, even dozens, done by the apprentices from small copies in the studio. This drawing is unusual in being the only one of its theme. When it first came to the Museum it was unidentified. But it is now clear that it matches a marble statue by an obscure pupil of Michelangelo, one of the famous set done for the tombs of the Medici family. It differs in certain details from the statue, which Tintoretto never saw, so he no doubt made it from Michelangelo's original clay model. This model, after being used in carving the statue, belonged to a friend of Tintoretto's in Venice and is now lost. The Sarasota drawing is the only record in existence of this lost work of Michelangelo.

When one great artist copies another great artist, which happens rarely, the result is something remarkable. The facial expression here is much more intense than in the marble copy, and there Tintoretto surely is recording Michelangelo faithfully. But the technical means have changed. Instead of heavy power, Tintoretto conveys the saint's feeling by the power of light breaking up the surface of his face.

The Rest On The Flight Into Egypt

(Cat. No. 82)

by IL VERONESE *Venetian School, 1528-1588*



PAOLO Caliari, called Il Veronese (after his native town of Verona), was third in the trio of great Venetian painters of the High Renaissance who reflected the glory of the Golden Age of the City on the Lagoons. With the help of the new oil technique, said to have been invented by the Van Eycks in Flanders during the first half of the 15th century, Italian painters were able to cover increasingly larger areas of canvas in a fashion more fluid and rapid than had been possible before. Thus it became possible to achieve compositions of monumental grandeur, reflecting the magnificent life of Venice—a colorful seaport in close contact with the sumptuous pageantry of the Near East. The Venetian painters' development and use of transparent oil glazes and scumbles (opaque pigments thinly diluted), applied in multiple layers over the underpainting

(usually indicated sketchily in tempera), created a whole new world of color—richer, deeper and more sensuous in its effect than any that had preceded it.

A painstaking technique, made necessary by the very nature of tempera (colors ground in water and mixed with the yolk of egg), had carried over from earlier painting in Italy. It now gave way, particularly in Venice, to the free flow of paint over canvas—the brush guided by an adept and facile hand. Thus the surfaces and textures of Venetian painting of that period took on the bloom and sheen of the rich velvets and brocades that were the products of the city's looms and adorned the persons of wealthier citizens. Through such new devices, the decorative aspects of Western painting were widely enhanced. Furthermore, the novel Venetian breadth of scale and handling of the painter's materials was not only to lead to the vast panoramas of the Baroque vision (to follow almost immediately) but was to influence as well the whole course of subsequent painting.

Of the three renowned High Renaissance masters in Venice, Titian was certainly the most profound and the most poetic. Tintoretto was the greatest dramatist, and Veronese, the greatest decorator. His preoccupation with decoration was perhaps his principal weakness. He utilized even his holy figures as actors in a brilliant theatrical performance, clothing them in the rich costumes of his own time, and placing them

in magnificent settings—interiors and exteriors of palaces inspired by (but often excelling in splendor) the actual structures with which the city abounded. His banquet scenes, such as the *Marriage at Cana* and the *Feast in the House of Levi*, though purporting to mirror New Testament incidents, actually reflect the life of his own day. Tables groan under sumptuous food and accessories. Grouped around them are crowds of resplendently dressed guests.

The Ringling *Flight into Egypt* presents a more intimate scene, but is still magnificent in style. The Holy Family has paused to rest beneath some trees—an oasis on the road to Egypt. Mary is suckling the Child while St. Joseph looks on solicitously, holding some cooking utensils. Five angels attend to the needs of the weary travelers, some busying themselves with the laundry, others procuring nourishment. Those home-like touches contribute a moving simplicity and poetry to the grandeur of the conception. Everywhere the glowing Venetian color is evident. The vermilions and madders, the blues and greens create a spiraling group of angelic forms that encircle the Virgin, as though in protection. The painter has clothed his figures in simple garments, suitable for the voyage, rather than in brocaded robes. Instead of an architectural background, he shows us a clump of exotic trees, beyond which we catch a glimpse of distant landscape.

In its issue of April 23, 1952, *Time Magazine* reproduced this painting in color, as one in its series of favorite pictures in important art museums of this country.

Christ Kneeling In The Garden Of Gethsemane (Cat. No. 89)

by FRANCESCO DA PONTE DA BASSANO *Venetian School*, 1549-1592



THIS subject was often treated by painters of the 16th century, who found it exceptionally well suited to a dramatic interpretation. It is a moving scene—Christ accepting the chalice from the hands of the angel, while below, Peter, James and John sleep unaware, and Judas approaches with the soldiers. In a magnificent vertical composition, Francesco Bassano pierces the darkness with rays of light issuing from the glowing chalice to isolate the principal figures. A mysterious phosphorescence further accents the garments, foliage and grass. This picture, inspired by the freely painted late works of Tintoretto, in its Mannerist implications makes the transition from the Venetian High Renaissance to El Greco. In its preoccupation with concentrated sources of light, it anticipates comparable phenomena in the work of Caravaggio, Honthorst and Rembrandt.

Giving Drink to The Thirsty

(Acc. No. 50.2)

by BERNARDO STROZZI *Genoese School*, 1581-1644



BERNARDO STROZZI, called the “Genoese Priest,” was the leading Baroque master of the Genoese School. He was first influenced by the brilliant color and vivid movement of the painting of Peter Paul Rubens (who had left his mark on Genoa during a sojourn there in 1607). Strozzi moved on to Venice, where he became familiar with the flowing brushwork of the great High Renaissance masters. With his new technical brilliance, he re-interpreted the Naturalism that had been created in Rome by Caravaggio and had also helped to form the style of Rubens.

In this picture, the two principal figures fill the major part of the composition, focusing on the enormous cruse of wine, which serves as a link between the two halves. Strozzi has chosen to represent one of the Works of Mercy. The pulsating Baroque rhythms of the composition, the richly brushed passages used to indicate the costumes and the cruse, and the monumental yet human dignity of the figures all contribute to this impressive and characteristic work by the master. Until this painting was purchased by the State of Florida in 1950, there had been no canvas by Strozzi in the collection.

Saint Matthew Writing The Gospel

(Cat. No. 109)

by NICOLAS REGNIER *Roman School*, about 1590-1667



THIS painting is an exceptionally fine example of the influence of the great Italian innovator of the early 17th century, Michelangelo Merisi da Caravaggio. We discern in it Caravaggio's preference for a dark and undescribed background. Against that background, broadly and plastically modeled figures are isolated and dramatized, with the help of a mysterious beam of light, imagined as coming from a concealed source behind the spectator. Those pictorial devices Caravaggio handed on to subsequent generations of 17th century painters, along with his fondness for such characteristic types as are seen here: wrinkled old men and angels with realistically observed feathered wings.

Saint Matthew appears here seated at a table, writing the Gospel at the dictation of his angel, who places a protective hand on his shoulder. Caravaggio himself treated this subject in a famous composition (formerly in the Berlin Museum) which was the probable inspiration for the Ringling picture.

Caravaggio's simple, forceful drama was an exciting challenge to the young painters who swarmed to Rome from all over Europe. Since his works are rare, the Museum is fortunate that it can show a powerful example of his early influence. Though these young artists' individual personalities are not fully known, it is very probable that this is a work of Regnier, a native of the French-Flemish border area, painted in Rome when he was about twenty-five.

A Lake Surrounded By Rocky Mountains

(Cat. No. 154)

by SALVATOR ROSA *Neapolitan School, 1615-1673*



THE Italian painter, Salvator Rosa, was famous in his own day as a poet, engraver and musician as well as a painter. His fame was even more widespread at the end of the 18th century, when his landscapes especially appealed to the rising Romantic sensibilities. They appeared to be duplicates of the picturesque scenes described by the English Lake poets, and could arouse that sense of the “horrendous,” which was the stock-in-trade of the purveyors of the “Gothick” tales. Rosa painted a wide variety of subjects in addition to his landscapes—religious scenes, portraits, and the battle scenes that particularly endeared him to his contemporaries.

In his landscapes, the forces of nature perpetually appear to overwhelm the tiny figures that have strayed into rocky chasms, or whisper under trees that have been ravaged by violent storms or split asunder by lightning bolts. These small figures apparently belong to bands of soldiers, brigands and smugglers, who are lost or hiding in the mountain fastnesses, in melancholy solitude.

Rosa did much to liberate landscape as a subject for the painter. Whereas in the 15th century glimpses of landscape were introduced into compositions as accessory to the figures, and during the 16th century were integrated with them, it was not until the 17th century that the figures, in certain instances, began to play a far more subordinate role. With Rosa, in fact, man begins to be subjugated by nature. This Neapolitan master is one of the first painters to foretell the Romantic era of the early 19th century, although he lived many years before the Romantic aesthetic came to its full fruition. By that time landscapes came to be painted with no figures in them at all.

Presumed Self-Portrait Of The Artist As Poet

(Cat. No. 152)

by SALVATOR ROSA *Neapolitan School, 1615-1673*

THE features of the person represented in this portrait bear no real resemblance to those in other known likenesses of the artist. However, some scholars have suggested that, because the subject is represented as a poet, it may be intended as a portrait of Rosa himself, for it is known that the painter was a poet and musician as well. In any case, there has been created here a solitary, thoughtful and even melancholy figure, a Byronic young man who peers through and beyond reality into the distant realms of his own imagination. Because Lord Byron was the great romantic figure of the 19th century, it is not surprising to find an English critic in 1846 more impressed by this picture than by a Rembrandt portrait. As early as 1824, the Ringling picture had been engraved as a frontispiece for Lady Morgan's book on the "Life and Times of Salvator Rosa."

In the dramatic spotlighting of the face against the dark background can be seen the ever present influence of Caravaggio, whose innovations had left their mark on much 17th century painting.

In recent times, the paintings of Rosa have again returned to fashion. Indeed there are few museums in this country that have not now acquired examples of his art. It is thus fortunate that the Ringling Collection can boast no fewer than five important pictures by an artist who was to exert wide-spread influence on subsequent centuries.



A Stormy Sea

(Acc. No. 52.2)

by ALESSANDRO MAGNASCO *Genoese School, c. 1677-1749*

THIS highly interesting painter, nicknamed Lissandrino, was one of the first Baroque masters to regain popularity in the 20th century, when most 17th century painting was unfashionable. The fantastic inventions of Magnasco appealed to a growing taste



for painting based on imagination rather than on a sterile transcription of reality such as had developed in the 19th century.

The Genoese master may be regarded as a sort of bridge between the 17th and 18th centuries. His fondness for shadowy, macabre interiors in which Black Masses are celebrated or hangings take place alternates with his interest in highly dramatic landscapes or storm-racked seas pounding on rocky shores. Dark trees frame the violent skies. In this picture, figures in small scale bring the gull-like sailing vessels safe to shore. Fishermen and their families, with nets, are grouped at the water's edge. Magnasco's landscapes fall between the romantic inven-

tions of Salvator Rosa and the more pastoral quietude of later 18th century examples.

A Stormy Sea, undoubtedly inspired by the artist's familiarity with the Ligurian coast, was purchased by the State of Florida in 1952. The Ringling Collection had contained no picture attributed with certainty to this master.

Hagar In The Wilderness

(Cat. No. 132)

by PIETRO DA CORTONA *Roman School*, 1596-1669



THE subject is based on the story in Genesis of Abraham's wife who was exiled in the desert and was near death, until an angel showed her a spring. It was a favorite with people in the Baroque period, who were especially moved by the dramatic elements of religion.

This painting is an excellent illustration of how remarkable the Ringling Museum's Baroque collection is. It is the only significant work in America by Pietro da Cortona, who is widely considered the greatest Italian painter of the middle Baroque period. The most important book on Baroque painting, by Hermann Voss, shows only three American owned paintings in reproduction, including this and a second Ringling picture. It is thus one of the outstanding pictures by which to understand the Baroque.

In general, there were two available procedures, the tempestuous one of Rubens and the more classical one of Guido Reni or Poussin. Pietro da Cortona was able to blend these two qualities that seemed contradictory. His is a gentle Baroque, with balanced, flowing movement and clear dramatic expression. The firm but delicate color, revealed in recent restoration, is part of the same mood.

An Angel

by GIAN LORENZO BERNINI, 1598-1680



BERNINI was the greatest Baroque sculptor. “Baroque” in art means a method of showing the human figure with its physical weight and yet in active movement. To show this quality, the large, formal marbles, polished by Bernini’s assistants, are less effective than the first rapid sketches modelled in clay by the artist. This type of sketch in sculpture is called a *bozzetto*.

Bernini dominated all the arts in Rome for fifty years, being favored by a series of popes. He directed the work in St. Peter’s and other huge commissions. This phase of his life began when he was twenty-six. Two years later, in 1626, he agreed for another patron to carve two marble angels for the high altar of the church of Sant’ Agostino. The angels are still there, but as it turned out Bernini did not carve them. He turned the work over to assistants. This clay angel is the one which Bernini made to give his assistants as a guide. This was the first time that Bernini was too busy to do the carving himself, which later happened often. Therefore this is the first of many similar *bozzetti*.

Since all of Bernini’s large works are in European museums, the Museum was very fortunate in 1960 to be able, using the Ringling endowment fund, to add this especially appropriate sculpture to the collection of Baroque paintings. The quick modelling enhances the quality of flowing, graceful movement as the angel kneels beside the altar.

Portrait Of An Unidentified Cardinal

(Cat. No. 128)

by IL SASSOFERRATO *Roman School*, 1609-1685

THE Italian painter, Giovanni Battista Salvi, better known as Il Sassoferrato, presents a characteristic portrait of the Roman High Baroque period. We see an as yet unidentified cardinal seated in an armchair, before a painting of the Madonna and Child inspired by Raphael's composition known as the *Madonna McIntosh*. A distant view of a military encampment with soldiers is evidence that the cardinal is a militant churchman. The psychological impact of the cardinal's figure is tremendous. As in so many other examples of Baroque portraiture, an immediacy of contact is established between the sitter and the spectator, which in this instance is even a little terrifying. We are at once aware that we are confronted with an astute, nay scheming, politician who is conscious of the vanities of this world, and the pomp and glory of his earthly circumstances. He appears to be convinced that he will be assured of an equally eminent position in the life hereafter.



The colors are as insistent as the personality of the subject. An astonishing gamut of reds is played against the blues. An identical color scheme is also employed in the *Madonna and Child* (Cat. No. 127) by the same master. Sassoferrato was noted for his pictures of madonnas, which constantly show the influence of Raphael. In this instance, the famous *Madonna of the Chair* has inspired the painter. Thus, it is evident that Raphael (1483-1520) still served as a constant inspiration for those 17th century painters who leaned towards the more classical and academic aspects of Baroque development.

The Flaying Of Marsyas

(Cat. No. 335)

by an ITALIAN FOLLOWER OF JUSEPE RIBERA *Spanish School*, c. 1590-1652



THIS is perhaps one of the most dramatic compositions in the Ringling Collection. Its subject, the flaying of Marsyas by Apollo, is a familiar one to 17th century painting. We see the god of music (identified by the stringed musical instrument near him on the ground), in the act of flaying the satyr, who lies on the ground, his legs bound to a tree. It will be remembered that the satyr Marsyas challenged Apollo to a musical contest. Though Marsyas lost the contest, he was punished, as we see here, for his temerity in challenging the powerful god.

We know two signed versions of this picture by Ribera—one in Brussels, and one in Naples, where he had become a leading painter of the school. Those two pictures are similar in composition, but in reverse. The Sarasota version differs somewhat from either of them. It is certainly not a copy but a free transcription by an Italian follower of the Spanish master who was in all probability inspired by an engraving. It is conceivable that the Ringling picture may be related to the work of Guido Reni, who treated the same subject in a painting now in Munich.

The Martyrdom of Saint Januarius

(Acc. No. 50.1)

by MONSU DESIDERIO *Neapolitan School*, 1593 - after 1644



“MONSU DESIDERIO” is the nickname of the artist Francois de Nome, born in Metz, in France, who arrived in Rome at the age of eleven, was apprenticed there, and settled permanently in Naples when he was seventeen.

Desiderio painted in a peculiarly personal way. As a somewhat belated Mannerist, his art revives certain Gothic features, such as the use of gold to highlight details, and the creation of nervous forms and writhing complexities of light and shade. He even invented buildings in the Gothic style of centuries before, which constantly appear as shimmering ghosts of the past. In fact, he was more interested in these architectural hallucinations than in the figures, which for the most part were painted by another artist named Corenzio. In this instance, however, the figures, which enact a characteristically macabre scene, the execution of a saint, seem to be by Desiderio himself.

Cardinal Albrecht As Saint Jerome

(Cat. No. 308)

by LUCAS CRANACH THE ELDER *German School, 1472-1553*

CRANACH was known as both painter and engraver. He was attached to the courts of the three Saxon Electors, and was an intimate friend of Martin Luther's. As one of the most famous and representative German painters of the 16th century, he stands midway between the earlier Gothic German art and the new imported fashion of the Italian Renaissance which had begun to intrude on northern art.

Here we see Cardinal Albrecht of Brandenburg represented as Saint Jerome, seated in his study. On the wall, hangs a picture of a madonna, a new version among the artist's well known paintings of the subject. A broadening perspective, stemming from the tiny figure of the cardinal, is developed along the lines of the table top until it reaches even the animals in the immediate foreground. Among these appear the lion (symbol of Saint Jerome), and various other animals: a deer, a beaver, a squirrel, a flock of pheasants, partridges, a hare and a parrot. These may all be interpreted symbolically.

The careful depiction of the various inanimate objects grows out of the Flemish tradition of still life painting. Throughout may be observed the painter's naïve delight in his subject matter, lending characteristic charm and savor to the composition. This work, important in size, is one of the most beguiling of those by Cranach in American collections. It is signed with a flying dragon (usual signature of the artist), and dated 1526. The chandelier hanging from the ceiling, made of antlers terminating in a female figure, is characteristic of many such made in Germany during the 16th and 17th centuries. An actual chandelier, somewhat later in date than the painting, may be studied in the Ringling Residence.



The Descent From The Cross

(Cat. No. 199)

by ADRIAEN ISENBRANT *Flemish School, ? - 1551*

ALTHOUGH Mr. Ringling's chief interest lay in the field of Baroque painting of the 17th century, which mirrors in many ways the grandiose spectacle of the circus, he purchased a number of paintings belonging to earlier schools and periods. One of

the most important of these is the *Descent From the Cross* by this most distinguished follower of Gerard David. Here we see Joseph of Arimathaea and Nicodemus lowering the lifeless body of the Redeemer from the Cross. His mother, Mary, supported by Saint John, kisses His hand, while Mary Magdalene, holding the nails, stands mournfully at the right.



The new Flemish method of painting in oil, thought to have been invented some decades earlier by the Van Eycks, made possible brilliant colors and a painstaking technique, which could depict the details of distant landscape and buildings with such fidelity that they appeared to the spectator as if seen through a telescope. The figures in such early Flemish paintings may seem rather stiff and

wooden. That is because they were inspired originally by wood sculpture of the School of Cologne. Even their draperies hang in angular folds, a further reflection of the technique of the wood carver. Many of the heads, however, in Isenbrant's *Descent From the Cross* may well have been studied from life. (The realistic portrait appears in Flanders early in the 15th century.) They are very different in concept from the more idealized heads to be seen in an Italian religious painting of the same period.

Portrait Of A Lady

(Cat. No. 253)

by REMBRANDT VAN RIJN *Dutch School, 1606-1669*

OF all the Dutch painters of the 17th century, Rembrandt, the most celebrated in our time, was perhaps the least appreciated in his own. His style, based on the innovations of the great Italian Naturalist, Caravaggio, achieved a grandeur beyond the appreciation of his own countrymen. Their approach, on the whole, remained within the realm of the factual. Rembrandt was above all a portraitist, not of the exterior appearance of man, but rather of his inward being—his spiritual exaltation and his intellectual anguish. To express these subjective and romantic concepts, Rembrandt moved from the characteristic Dutch feeling for detail to a broad impasto, achieved by heavily loading his brush with pigment. The edges of his forms are diffused rather than defined—luminous shapes emerging from the mysterious depths of his barely described and shadow-filled backgrounds. A golden light from some hidden and inexplicable source reveals the faces and figures of his subject, endowing them with poetic life and contemplative energy.



All Dutch painters were fascinated by the realistic problem of light, how it fell on objects and how, as a result, shadows were cast by them. Rembrandt, too, was fascinated by light, but used it to forge his own particular and imaginative expressions of intense subjective emotion. Here in this portrait of a lady, obviously of wealth and position, the artist characteristically makes the spectator aware of her individual personality.

Portrait Of Pieter Olycan, Burgomaster Of Haarlem

(Cat. No. 251)

by FRANS HALS *Dutch School, 1585-1666*

IN 17th century Holland, Frans Hals was the most renowned portraitist of his day. His fame is still widespread, though in our time he is perhaps overshadowed by Rembrandt. It is, on the whole, quite easy to understand how this happened. Rem-

brandt peered more deeply into the psychological caverns of man's mind. He is thus, in a sense, more modern. Hals contented himself, for the most part, with the rapid depiction of man's superficial appearance.

He was able to do this through his development of a brilliant technique, which made possible the re-creation of surface appearance with striking immediacy. Thus the personages saved from oblivion by Hals may seem to breathe and even to move with healthy and lusty mien, but they rarely appear to think or suffer. It is the sheer brilliance of his brushwork that excites our admiration, rather than a sympathy toward human suffering such as moves us emotionally in Rembrandt.



Hals preferred a somewhat somber palette. His blacks and grays and ochres and reds are tuned to one another in somber fashion; but through these his liveliness and agility shine energetically. We see Pieter Jacobz Olycan, once Burgomaster of Haarlem, as if he stood before us.

Hals is closely related to Velasquez. The aims and techniques of the two painters are not dissimilar. But, whereas the Spanish court painter depicted the princes of his time and their attendants, the clients of Hals were the solid members of Dutch bourgeois society. When he tired of them, there were always the harridans and boisterous cavaliers of the taverns. On each he lavished his bravura performance.

The Rape Of The Sabine Women

(Cat. No. 269)

by JAN STEEN *Dutch School, 1626-1679*



EXCEPT Rembrandt, the Dutch artists of the great century were specialists: some in portraits, others in landscape, seascape, animals, still life and other subjects. These are all themes based on what we see around us; none of the specialties is historical, religious, or symbolic.

Jan Steen was a specialist in groups of people in lively and usually cheerful action. He painted parties, Christmas festivities, tavern scenes and the like. The action is always vigorous and sometimes rowdy.

For this reason the *Rape of the Sabine Women* is unusual. It is based on the story in Roman history of how the city was founded. The soldiers invited the neighboring tribe of Sabines to a feast and then seized the women.

Out of about seven hundred known paintings by Steen, there are only twelve to fifteen with subjects drawn from history. It is typical of John Ringling's taste that he picked this rarity, much more Baroque in spirit than nine-tenths of Dutch paintings.

But the fascinating quality of the painting is that, in their historical disguise, the people are the same Dutch peasants that Steen always paints, sly and rough. They seem to be dressed up in costumes, which don't conceal their true nature, adding to the humor of this usually dignified story. As the most recent Dutch author of a book on Steen sums it up: "In the priceless canvas of the *Rape of the Sabines*, we have a genuine Jan Steen project."

Restoration in 1959 revealed the delicacy of color, which had previously been hidden under heavy varnish.

Hagar And Ishmael In The Wilderness

(Cat. No. 270)

by KAREL DU JARDIN *Dutch School, c. 1622-1678*



THE impact of Italian art on certain 17th century painters of the Netherlands was, in many instances, the result of their sojourns in Italy, where they came in contact with the works of the great masters of the past as well as those of their own time.

Such a painter was Karel du Jardin, who in all probability was born in Amsterdam. He went to Rome as a young man, and stayed there for several years, enjoying great success. His pictures were equally well received in Holland, after his return to his native country. A great affection for Italy, however, drew him again to Venice, where he remained until his death.

Such Italianate Dutchmen, expatriate painters from the North, grafted the elements of the Italian grand style onto their traditional fondness for the depiction of everyday reality. Thus, here, the design includes only a few figures, quite large in scale, composed within the confines of a pyramid. The dark background, with the spotlight illumination, is reminiscent of Caravaggio, and serves to accentuate the muted tones of the three primary colors that form the harmonies. Traces of Mannerist nervousness can still be recognized in the fluttering draperies and gracefully pointing hands of the angel. The elegance of the attitudes is still another trade-mark of the late 16th century style that preceded the Baroque. Perhaps only in the faces do we find types that betray the artist's Dutch origin.

Still Life With Parrots

(Cat. No. 289)

by JAN DAVIDZ DE HEEM *Dutch School, 1606-1684*

THE groaning tables of wealthy 17th century Dutch burghers are often reflected in the still life paintings commissioned from Dutch artists. That type of subject was first developed by painters of the northern countries, and was especially popular in Holland. There, from the beginning, artists had preferred to depict faithfully and with almost uncanny accuracy the appearance of the everyday objects that surrounded them. During the 17th century, still life became the specialty of many masters, who concentrated exclusively on that problem.

One of the most celebrated was Jan de Heem, who, in this recognized masterpiece, profligately displays a rich conglomeration of delicacies, elegant appurtenances and exotic accessories, such as might have been found in the houses of his wealthy patrons. Although the artist created thus a kind of historic document of his period, obviously his interest lay chiefly in the colors and textures of the assorted objects. He was fascinated by the light reflected from the hard surfaces of metal, the pearly surfaces of shells, the moist grayness of oysters, and the pebble texture of the lemon peel.

The beauty inherent in this sort of painting lies in these subtle comparisons. This purely objective picture tells no story, preaches no sermon, and searches for no ideal except sensuous delight achieved through technical perfection.



The Departure Of Lot And His Family From Sodom

(Cat. No. 218)

by PETER PAUL RUBENS *Flemish School, 1577-1640*



THIS is undoubtedly the most famous Rubens in the Ringling Collection. It represents the flight of Lot and his family, guided by angels, from the flaming city. It was painted about 1615.

The way in which Rubens involves the spectator in the dramatic escape demonstrates the painter's masterly treatment of his subject matter. The onlooker feels that he, too, has become part of the scene, for he is drawn into the centrifugal force set in motion by the spiraling gyration of the minor characters around the axis established by the central figure of Lot. The heroic scale of the figures and their exuberant vitality further contribute to this response. The textures throughout come alive with brilliant, glowing colors.

Portrait Of The Archduke Ferdinand

(Acc. No. 48.1)

by PETER PAUL RUBENS *Flemish School, 1577-1640*

ALTHOUGH John Ringling had acquired many pictures by Rubens, the most celebrated Flemish master of the 17th century, he had included in his collection no portrait by that artist. Because Rubens' fame had rested on his portrait painting as well as on his sketches and large figure compositions, this portrait was purchased by the State of Florida in 1948 from funds left by Mr. Ringling for the further enrichment of his collection. The acquisition strengthens the already imposing group of pictures by a master who had a very special appeal for the circus man. In the late 18th century, this picture of the Archduke Ferdinand was owned by the celebrated English portrait painter, Sir Joshua Reynolds. After 1898, it had hung in the London house of the late J. P. Morgan as part of his collection.

The picture was painted in 1635, shortly after its subject, the Archduke Ferdinand, Cardinal-Infante of Spain, had been appointed Governor of the Netherlands. He succeeded his aunt, the Infanta Isabella Clara Eugenia, whose likeness may be seen in two other pictures of the Ringling Collection (Cat. Nos. 214 and 217). The governor is seen in three-quarter length before a column and swirling draperies, typical decorative devices of the Baroque "state" portrait. He wears a suit of armor to remind us of his military prowess, exemplified by his newly won victory over the Swedes at Nordlingen. But his helmet has been laid aside, and his left arm has caught up his sash to reveal a sheathed sword. He has exchanged his helmet for a hat, symbolic of the peaceful regime that is to be ushered in under his guidance. Even his pale, untroubled countenance, framed by flowing golden locks, suggests the dawn of a new era.

The portrait of Ferdinand becomes a subtle allegory of war and peace. Interpreted in such a way, many of Rubens' paintings become more meaningful than they appear at first glance. They are no longer solely Baroque exercises in color and movement, as one authority has said. They are works in which abundant forms, controlled by a superior intelligence, are made instruments of subtle thoughts and feelings.



Pausias And Glycera

(Cat. No. 219)

by PETER PAUL RUBENS *Flemish School, 1577-1640*

and OSIAS BEERT THE ELDER *Flemish School, c. 1580-1624*



THIS composition is of especial interest as an aid to the understanding of Flemish painting at the beginning of the 17th century. It represents the collaboration between two masters of very different aims. Rubens' early voyage to Italy had brought him into personal contact with the flourishing Venetian art of the High Renaissance (which had reached its zenith only a few decades before his arrival). Beert, on the other hand, still thought in the native Flemish terms of a pictorial transcription of reality, made possible by a devout observation of the forms of nature.

In this painting, the monumental figures from the brush of Rubens, broadly conceived and painted, are opposed by an entirely different point of view, namely the almost photographic indication of the flowers and insects so beloved of Beert. There are many instances of such early collaboration between Rubens, the traveler to Italy and Spain, and Beert, who stayed at home in Flanders. The latter was content to find, in the light mirrored in a single drop of water on a leaf, a perfection of beauty and reality to be revealed through his flawless technique. This picture stands at the threshold of the Flemish Baroque style. The aims and ideals of both 16th and 17th centuries confront one another here, as do those of Italy and Flanders.

In a list of paintings owned by Sir Gregory Page in England (dated 1761), this composition is called "Rubens and His Mistress." It is obviously related to the master's famous portrait of "The Artist and His Wife" in the Alte Pinakothek in Munich, painted about 1610. There is no reason, however, to believe that the painting here represents either the artist or his wife. Its date of execution can be placed with certainty between the years 1612 and 1615. The figures are surely intended to represent Pausias, a Greek painter of the fourth century, and his beloved Glycera, known for her talent as a weaver of garlands. Touching her arm affectionately, Pausias shows Glycera a portrait he has painted of her.

Classical subjects were the frequent choice of Rubens as of many other Renaissance and Baroque painters. The artist himself was a broadly educated man, a trusted diplomat, and a connoisseur and collector of antiquity marbles, which he often used as inspiration for his figures. His literary source, in this instance, was a tale by Pliny (Lib. XXXV, Chap. XL), which later served the German Goethe for one of his most beautiful poems.

The flowers were long considered to be the work of Jan Brueghel, and are so attributed in the larger Ringling Catalogue. The new and very plausible attribution to Beert has been made by Dr. Ingvar Bergström of Göteborg, Sweden.

The Calydonian Hunt

(Cat. No. 236)

by JAN FYT *Flemish School*, 1611-1661



THE surging vitality and compositional complexity of much 17th century painting is superbly shown in this picture. The subject is chosen from Greek mythology, always a source of inspiration to the Renaissance and Baroque painter. Atalanta, attended by her maidens, shoots the first arrow at the wild boar, which will be dispatched by Meleager and his companions. Those contrapuntal actions have seemingly been suspended by the painter for only the flick of an eyelash. We feel, as with a snapshot, that the movements will continue, once we have turned away; but for this fleeting instant we are enabled to grasp visually the entire scene. Note especially the animals, which not only are depicted with the utmost liveliness and realistic observa-

tion but form a powerful centrifugal movement around the boar, dramatically caught in the trap sprung by hunters and animals.

This picture, attributed to Rubens and Fyt when it was purchased by Mr. Ringling, was later ascribed to Johann Boeckhorst and Paul de Vos. It is so published in the museum's official catalogue. However, in 1950, when the picture was cleaned, the signature of Jan Fyt and the date 1648 were revealed on the rock in the center foreground, thus establishing beyond question the identity of the artist.

Fyt was a pupil of Frans Snyders'. Both were well known as specialists in animal and still life painting—favorite subjects for the Flemish artist of the 17th century.

Still Life With Game And A White Swan

(Cat. No. 234)

by FRANS SNYDERS *Flemish School, 1579-1657*



FRANS Snyders was surely one of the greatest of the 17th century specialists in the painting of lusty still lifes, and animals, alive or dead. Here we see depicted with almost frightening reality and vitality the carcasses of hares, deer, peacock, pheasant, boar, partridges, as though thrown on a stone bench after the hunter's return from the chase. The hunter himself may well be within the lodge, partaking of the rich remains of a previous expedition—peacock pies and superb roasts like those for which the present display is destined.

The 17th century appetite, especially in the Low Countries, was almost insatiable. Even today the kitchens of Holland and Belgium may still approximate but hardly duplicate the magnificent dishes of the Baroque imagination and table.

This painting may seem disturbing to less hardy palates today. Yet it must be admitted that its juicy textures and profligate display excite a certain sadistic side of our aesthetic experience. The nobility of the magnificently painted swan, central motif of the composition, is forgotten, as we imagine the succulent vapors that will arise from the pot into which it is eventually to fall.

Christ On The Cross

(Cat. No. 333)

by EL GRECO *Spanish School, 1541-1614*

DOMENICO Theotokopoulos, called El Greco, or The Greek, was born on the island of Crete in 1541. He went first to Venice, where he began to develop his very personal style of painting, especially under the influence of Tintoretto and the Bassano family. He was attracted to Spain around 1577 by the considerable artistic activity centering at the court of Philip II, and settled in Toledo, where he was active for many years. He died in 1614. His numerous paintings may be said to epitomize the so-called Mannerist style, which served as the bridge between the Renaissance and the Baroque. The clue to Mannerist painting can be found in its preference for attenuated forms (reminiscent of those in Gothic art) and eerie color harmonies, which suggest an unreal and phosphorescent world of supernatural illusion. So here, distortions of color and form lend a powerful mysticism to the always dramatic subject of the Crucifixion.

The figures are like apparitions materializing against a stormy sky. Mary, the Mother of Christ, and St. John stand below at the left, their fluttering hands, sensitively painted, expressing the poignancy of their anguish. At the right, a shimmering view of the painter's adopted city, Toledo, becomes the Jerusalem of the Crucifixion, approached by mounted centurions.

The works of El Greco have appealed strongly to modern eyes. Indeed, they approach the aims of Expressionism, one of the early movements of the 20th century, when many painters shunned the imitation of reality and sought to achieve emotional effects comparable to those created by this master.



The Madonna With The Child

(Cat. No. 334)

by JUSEPE DE RIBERA *Spanish School, 1590-1652*



WHEN this painting was discovered, a German scholar who had written the standard book on Ribera wrote an article on it, calling it a masterpiece and concluding, "There is no Madonna by Ribera superior to the Ringling example first published here."

This is an unusual painting for the artist in color and surface. He is very realistic, with particular interest in the dry skin and stringy muscles of people who have lived a hard life, and he likes a dark background.

The theme of this painting goes back to the Book of Revelation, which describes the vision of a woman clothed with the sun, with the moon under her feet. Religious writers decided that this refers to Mary, and artists showed her and the Christ Child with the crescent moon under her feet and the sun behind her. The great engraver Durer frequently used the subject, and once in 1498 abbreviated it to the half-length shown here. Ribera may have seen Durer's famous work. The golden tone of the background here suggests the sunlight. Another favorite subject of Spanish artists

in Ribera's time, the Immaculate Conception of Mary, also shows the crescent moon on the basis of the same vision, and Ribera certainly had it in mind.

All these elements made Ribera add a feeling of nobility and a tone of glowing brightness into his painting, though without losing his solid realistic technique. It is this exceptional extra quality, no doubt, that has caused it to be called a masterpiece.

The Immaculate Conception

(Cat. No. 348)

by BARTOLOME ESTEBAN MURILLO *Spanish School, 1618-1682*

MURILLO was an extremely prolific artist, who painted so many versions of this subject that he became known as The Painter of the Conception. His pictures were extremely popular at the end of the 19th century, when a taste for sentimentality

brought his works back into fashion. Today his characteristic Sevillian sweetness is less admired, on the whole, although there is no denying that his art has a certain validity. The "vaporious" manner of his later years, with its golden light diffused throughout the canvas is clearly evident in this composition.



It may be contrasted with an example of Murillo's middle period, the *Saint Joseph Supporting the Infant Christ* (Cat. No. 349), which is more intimate in feeling, and smaller in scale. *A Holy Family* (Cat. No. 347) in the Ringling Collection has also been attributed to Murillo. If it is actually by the hand of the master, it must belong to an early period, for it was surely created at a time when the painter was still influenced by Francisco Zurbarán.

Murillo's devotion to his native city prompted him to refuse an invitation to go to Madrid as court painter to Charles V, who had succeeded Philip IV. The artist preferred to remain in Seville, where he was engaged in the decoration of walls for both private and public buildings. Almost all of his paintings deal with religious subjects. He died at 64, after a fall from a scaffold.

Philip IV, King Of Spain

(Cat. No. 336)

by DIEGO VELASQUEZ *Spanish School, 1599-1660*

THE official type of royal court portrait, which attained its fullest expression in the Baroque period, can be admirably studied here. This particular example was painted by one of the most adroit of all manipulators of pigment, an artist who was



to exert a far-reaching influence on many subsequent portrait painters, even to some of those of our own time. Court portraits, apart from their artistic interest, played many roles. They served as regal gifts, to be passed from one court to another, or even as documents for the arrangement of important marriages, when photography was still undreamed of. The full length portrait, as here, was usually preferred. Its inclusion of the whole figure, clad in magnificent costume, could create the maximum impression of grandeur. The subject usually looks directly out at the spectator, but a certain aloof formality preserves his dignity and unattainability. He is like an actor taking a curtain call, and his identification of himself with the part he is playing is evident. He is close to us, yet he never condescends.

Velasquez preferred a sober palette. His blacks and grays, used in masterly fashion, are punctuated by singing accents of color. A rapid technique, learned from the Venetians, enabled him to seize the likeness of his subjects rapidly and, with the utmost freedom and dispatch, to indicate on the canvas the highlights of their accessories and dress. His brilliant description of the actual appearance can be contrasted with Greco's method of transcending reality with the aid of the powerful distorting lens of his own emotional vision.

The subject of this painting, Philip IV, was the great patron of Velasquez. He was a Hapsburg, born in 1605, who was painted many times by the master. In this portrait he appears to be about twenty-two. He died in 1665.

The Ecstasy of St. Paul

by NICOLAS POUSSIN, 1594-1665



THE theme is based on Second Corinthians XII 2 "I knew a man in Christ above fourteen years ago (whether in the body, I cannot tell; or whether out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth) such a one caught up into the third heaven." The subject is rare in paintings, but was of special interest to the Baroque period, which emphasized the dramatic aspects of religion with intense feeling and action. Among Poussin's works this painting is unusually like those of other Baroque artists in the swirling airiness, while the Madonna shows his more personal qualities. In particular, the St. Paul shows that he had studied and modified a painting of the same subject by the Roman artist Domenichino.

In 1643, at the height of Poussin's career, his frequent patron Chantelou, a French government official, asked him to paint this picture, so as to form a pair with a "Vision of Ezekiel" he owned, a copy from a famous work of Raphael. Poussin wrote to Chantelou that he "feared my trembling hand would fail in a work accompanying Raphael's" and when he sent him the painting he repeated: "I beg you, to avoid calumny I would get if people saw my painting compared with Raphael's, to keep it far apart from what could ruin it and make it lose what little beauty it has." But a mutual friend wrote that Poussin's painting is as fine as Raphael, the best he had done, and that it would show France too had produced a Raphael. The painting was famous and often reproduced, but was almost lost to sight after the French Revolution until it was acquired for the Ringling Museum in 1956.

The Holy Family

(Cat. No. 361)

by NICOLAS POUSSIN *French School, 1594-1665*

POUSSIN created the heroic classical style for French painting. His figures, aloof and even at times austere, are like marble embodiments of the holy characters, pagan deities and heroes of his compositions. He can be considered the artistic antagonist of Rubens, who was his senior by seventeen years. As one of the greatest masters of the classical Baroque, Poussin's reserve, in contrast to Rubens' flamboyance, was the cause of one of the greatest controversies in art history, during the closing decades of the 17th century—the battle between the Poussinists and the Rubenists.



In the first half of the 17th century, Italy was still the center of the greatest artistic activity in all Europe. The fame of Leonardo, Raphael and Michelangelo had spread far, and numbers of French, Flemish, Dutch and Spanish painters were flocking to Italy, and especially to Rome, to study the masterpieces of the Renaissance and coeval works.

At that time, Italian painting could follow either two directions. It might develop along the lines laid down by Caravaggio, an innovator and revolutionary who had created a

furor with his new theories and practice of Naturalism; or it might follow the eclectic teachings of the Carracci family, active in Bologna and Rome. The Carracci were determined to keep alive, if possible, the tenets of the great artistic principles of the High Renaissance. Therefore, in their academy (which was in fact the first art school), they had concocted teachable, and thus academic, formulas for "correct" procedures which, as artistic formulas, could be handed on to their students.

Nicolas Poussin was among those artists who went to Italy to study, and spent much of his life in Rome until his death there in 1665. He was drawn more to the Classical point of view of the Carracci than to the Caravaggesque novelties of lighting and dramatic expressiveness. Nevertheless, into the drying veins of the academic systems of the Carracci he injected a French sense of elegance, and a fondness for unusual color harmonies that make his pictures especially admired in our time.

In this *Holy Family*, which was painted in 1655, the artist, using cool greenish tones to model the faces of the Virgin and Child, suggests their mystical and celestial origins. The more ruddy tonalities, employed for the Saint Joseph and the Infant Saint John, symbolize for us their comparatively earthly beginnings. If you compare this picture with a composition by Rubens, you will find, instead of the dynamic movement and color characteristic of the Flemish artist, a passion for logic and order, and a rigid taming of the emotions, which reflect the noble aims of Italian painting in general.

Two Allegorical Figures

(Acc. No. 51.1)

by GIOVANNI BATTISTA TIEPOLO *Venetian School, 1696-1770*

GIOVANNI BATTISTA TIEPOLO was, without doubt, one of the leading painters of the 18th century, and certainly one of the greatest decorators of all time. He was gifted with an enormous facility, and was indefatigable in his efforts. The walls



and ceilings of Venice and the Veneto, and eventually some of those of Germany and Spain as well, glowed with a rich repertory of allegorical and mythological allusions, from the seemingly unending sources of his inspiration.

His pearly colors seem to make the interior of church, palace and villa incandescent; and his countless pen and wash drawings, which served as preparation for those decorations, reveal some of the most brilliant and evocative pictorial music of the Rococo period. In him, the sumptuous magnificence of the Venetian High Renaissance style is born again in even more enchanting form. The unending spatial vistas of the Baroque are multiplied and filled with a parade of gods and goddesses, heroes and heroines, whose monumental stature is fitting accompaniment to the tragic expressiveness of their faces.

This transferred fresco was purchased by the State of Florida for the Ringling Collection in 1951. It is thought to have been painted for a famous villa near Vicenza. In it we see two impressive and typical figures of Tiepolo's imagination. They seem

formed of molten gold, and appear against a background of silver, interrupted by a pyramid. Their identity cannot yet be definitely ascertained. Perhaps they represent Mars and Venus, the god of war and goddess of love, or perhaps Antony and Cleopatra as Mars and Venus. Some scholars have seen in them an allegorical representation of the triumph of Beauty over Riches and Power. Whatever the artist meant to portray, his powerful draughtsmanship and dramatic force were superbly revealed in this simple yet majestic composition.

Circe Entertains Odysseus

(Cat. No. 172)

by GIOVANNI PAOLO PANNINI *Roman School*, 1692-1765



IN this painting, the sorceress Circe is seen entertaining the wandered Odysseus at a banquet in her palace. Above the traveler's head floats Hermes, messenger of the gods, who has given Odysseus a healing plant to enable him to withstand Circe's magic. In the foreground appear the former companions of Odysseus, now turned into swine by the enchantress. On the terrace are the servants of Circe, with lions, tigers, bears, dogs and other animals, once human beings, whom she had earlier bewitched.

In Rome, Pannini was the leader of a group of artists who specialized in the painting of imaginary ruins or classical structures forming vast architectural panoramas. Actual ruined buildings of the Roman past often served as inspiration for the fantasies invented by this painter. Architectural themes are endlessly embroidered to provide extensive settings for the tiny figures that emphasize the grandeur of the scale.

Similar elaborate architectural inventions, many designed for theaters of the period by the noted Galli-Bibiena family of the 18th century, served as settings for dramas and operas. In observing a painting such as Pannini's, we almost feel ourselves to be spectators at an 18th century theatrical performance, wherein the miniature figures are acting out a classical drama.

Presumed Portrait Of Louis XV, King Of France (Cat. No. 380)

by JEAN MARC NATTIER *French School, 1685-1766*

THIS painting is typical of French court portraiture of the first half of the 18th century. At that time, the highly formal style of the period of Louis XIV had somewhat relaxed, though much of its theatrical and showy grandeur still persisted.



Very often the person represented was shown with the attributes of a god or goddess, as though playing a part in a classical drama or ballet.

In this instance, a figure, assumed to be the King of France, appears as Bacchus, god of wine, holding a goblet in his left hand and, in his right, a winestock or *thyrsos*.

Nattier, like so many portraitists of the period, excelled in the painting of rich surface textures such as brocades, taffetas and laces. Here his skill is evident in the depiction of the leopard, and the furry leopard skin thrown over the shoulder of the figure, contrasted with the moist globes of the grapes and the blue-green delicacy of the leaves. The pastel

range of the colors, too, is characteristic of this period, which is known as Rococo.

Equestrian Portrait Of General Philip Honeywood (Cat. No. 390)

by THOMAS GAINSBOROUGH *English School, 1727-1788*

ENGLISH portrait painting of the latter half of the 18th century stems almost directly from the tradition established in the first half of the 17th century by Anthony Van Dyck. Van Dyck, a co-worker with Rubens at a very early age, and later active with great success in Antwerp and Genoa, was called to England by Charles I in 1632. Thus the Flemish Baroque style of portraiture was transplanted onto British soil. There were many immediate and later followers of Van Dyck, including Sir Peter Lely (Cat. No. 385) and Sir Godfrey Kneller (Cat. No. 386), both represented in the Ringling Collection. Those painters, though inferior to Van Dyck, preserved the



familiar Baroque formula, depicting full-length or half-length figures clothed in satins and laces and set against sumptuous backgrounds of columns and swirling draperies, drawn back now and then to reveal a glimpse of landscape.

During the first half of the 18th century, that tradition became sufficiently out-moded to permit the appearance of a lusty realist, William Hogarth, perhaps the greatest of all English painters. The second half of the century saw the return of the grand, if somewhat artificial, manner. Colors became lighter in key, and a brilliant technical virtuosity often concealed a certain decorative emptiness and superficiality of approach. Real weaknesses of drawing and construction are often encountered in the work of many renowned English portrait painters of this period. In the portrait of General Honywood, the largest known painting by Gainsborough, the virtues and the faults of the English School are typified.

The concept of the equestrian portrait dates back to Roman sculpture and the mounted figure of the emperor, Marcus Aurelius. As a motif for both sculptor and painter, it re-echoes through the Renaissance and Baroque periods and up to our own time. Of particular note in the Honywood portrait is the transparent and free manner with which the landscape is handled, and the striking scarlet of the coat worn by the general.

In this gallery hangs another equestrian portrait, of the Marquis of Granby by Sir Joshua Reynolds, which is interesting to compare with the Gainsborough.

The Sisters

(Cat. No. 395)

by SIR HENRY RAEBURN *Scottish School, 1756-1823*

A RENOWNED Scottish portraitist painted this likeness of Georgina and Elizabeth Reay about 1810. The formal grandeurs of the late 18th century English portrait style, with which this picture is still connected, have relaxed somewhat under the spreading fashion for sentiment that was beginning to color the new century. A lyric, pensive atmosphere, induced by the autumnal foliage and the introduction of willow branches, enfolds the two figures, who have paused in their reading to contemplate nature (and, it must be confessed, to contemplate the spectator as well). Even the dog asleep at their feet suggests the quietude and peace of their pastoral retreat. Gone now are the columns and swirling draperies of the typical Baroque portrait formula. Nature appears to be everywhere. We feel that she has even dictated the undisclosed words on the pages of the book, for surely it is a pastoral poem that the sisters have been reading.

Another picture displaying the suave and facile brushwork characteristic of the best works of Raeburn is the full length portrait of Mr. Hope Vere (Cat. No. 396), in the same gallery. Recent cleaning has revealed the full beauty of the extremely sketchy painting of the landscape background. In these two examples of the master's art, we can see the golden tonalities of a palette that was keyed to Rembrandt's, and effects of illumination reminiscent of those employed by that Dutch master of the 17th century.



View From The Piazzetta In Venice

(Cat. No. 187)

by ANTONIO CANALETTO *Venetian School*, 1697-1768

LANDSCAPE painting, in various guises and disguises, was particularly attractive to the 18th century artist. In Venice especially, there was an active group of painters specializing in *vedute* or views of their native city, which offered an unending variety of picturesque subject matter. Often, as with Guardi, they also invented so-called *capricci* or caprices — romantic and imaginary visual variations on the sleepy landscapes and lagoons surrounding the city.

The model for the *vedute* had been established in the previous generation by Luca Carlevaris, author of the famous series of engravings known as the *Physiognomies of Venice* (1703). Whereas Guardi's treatment of his subject matter was comparatively poetic, Canaletto's was more concise. He preferred ruled lines for the delineation of his painted architecture, and the small figures with which he peoples his busy streets and squares are indicated by staccato dottings of pigment, which give us an almost shorthand description of their appearance.

Canaletto's characteristic approach is clearly illustrated in this small painting. We are standing in front of Sansovino's library, looking past the two famous columns toward the Riva degli Schiavoni, with the Ducal Palace seen at the left, and beyond it the prison. In the foreground, stalls have been set up, at which customers are busily engaged in purchasing the various wares offered to them by the merchants. A companion piece (No. 186) shows a vista of the Piazza San Marco, with the clock tower on the right.



EUROPEAN PAINTING The Fourteenth Century

THE ART of Western Europe had its beginnings in the 14th century when the imported Byzantine style was dying in Italy. During the Middle Ages, that style was spread throughout Europe by missal painters whose illuminated manuscripts served as inspiration for artists everywhere. Indeed, painting developed in the 14th century, at first, as a cheap substitute for the mosaic.

The mosaic, magnificent though it was as decoration for the walls and vaults of churches, was extremely costly. In fact, the expense had by then become almost prohibitive. Mosaics had to be executed for the most part by imported artisans who had learned their craft in Byzantium. The resplendent mosaic decorations required expensive materials, such as bits of semi-precious stone and gold-backed fragments of glass, which were set in plaster walls. Furthermore, the mosaic technique was ill-suited to the solution of a new problem—that of the movable or easel picture, painted on a wooden panel, which was coming into fashion. The ancient art of true fresco painting was now revived, and also became widely employed as a cheaper substitute for mosaic decoration.

Both fresco and panel painters, following the moribund Byzantine tradition, used lines and flat tones to accomplish their results. That is to say, they created their forms out of flat areas of color defined by darkish outlines. This use of outlines recalled the somewhat heavier ones of the mosaic patterns, made by rows of small stones.

The art of the East has always been essentially non-representational. That is why so many of the frescoes and panel pictures of the fourteenth century, influenced by Byzantine models, show us figures elongated and distorted, to convey their mystical significance. The ever-present gold background, characteristic of the mosaic and taken over by the panel picture, divorces the holy figures further from reality and provides them with a celestial aura. In those days, gold was of great intrinsic value, and its use, more often than not, was dedicated to the Church and the worship of the mystical divinities, particularly the Virgin Mary.

During the Gothic period, the Virgin had become the central figure of the Christian hierarchy. We see Her and Her Child, occupying the central position in countless compositions, occasionally surrounded by hosts of angels or attendant saints. Incised patterns often enriched the gold background of the pictures, especially in the halos that emphasized the more important personages. A panel by the Florentine painter Mariotto di Nardo (Cat. No. 7) depicts the Virgin as Queen of Heaven and Mother of our Lord. She is no ordinary human mother, but signifies for us the most profound and universal symbol of all—the symbol of human life passing from mother to child.

The dying Byzantine style was confronted by a new concept of painting implicit in the art of Giotto, a Florentine painter also active in Rome, Assisi and Padua in the early part of the 14th century. Giotto is often called the father of western painting because he influenced its subsequent development away from abstract pattern and toward the illusion of three-dimensional reality. His figures are not flat, but realistic

in the sense that they appear to possess both weight and volume. His personages are seen against a background of sky rather than of gold, or acting out the religious stories in miniature stage settings. In a sense, Giotto recreates in pictorial form the plastic boldness of Roman high relief sculpture. He served as the link between the Classical past and its approaching revival in the Renaissance. He set in motion the mechanism of realism to which painters were to subscribe for centuries. Fifteenth century Italian painters would investigate the laws of perspective and the correct rendering of anatomy. The illusion of space and depth would be extended by the Venetians of the 16th century, who were also to enlarge the repertory of color and scale. Baroque painters of the 17th century would be enabled to create their vast panoramas of space, and to people them with multitudes of figures in intricate compositions. Dutch painters of the same period were to investigate the problems of light and the way it revealed the familiar landscape and inanimate object.

Every school and every significant painter has made a contribution to the vital tradition of Western painting. As Americans, we are still the heirs of that tradition. Many steps in its development may be studied in the pictures of the Ringling Collection.

The Fifteenth Century

THE Renaissance style first saw light in the Italian city of Florence. It is called the Renaissance because at that time it was thought of as the rebirth of the arts of classical antiquity. It came about through the efforts of intellectuals, and of the architects, painters and sculptors of the 15th century, at a moment when the patronage of wealthy individuals had begun to supplant that of the Church.

During the Gothic period, which immediately preceded the Renaissance, all Christendom had subscribed to the mystical concept of a God who was pivot for a more or less anonymous mass of humanity. As the force of this Medieval belief and ecstatic subjugation to a universal credo began to diminish, man once more awakened to a passionate interest in his own body and intellect, such as he had enjoyed in Classical times. So, during the period of the Renaissance, the Gothic concept gradually weakened, and rational man emerged once again as an individual.

When the Church was almost the sole patron of the artist, masters had been forced to confine themselves almost exclusively to religious subjects. Indeed little other subject matter was conceivable at that time. Now, during the early years of the Renaissance, themes borrowed from the ancient Classical mythologies began to make their appearance, along with portraits of those persons who had now become the patrons of the artist. Furthermore, even the everyday pursuits of man came gradually to be worthy of the painter's interest (Cat. No. 22).

The Classical past had never been entirely forgotten (thanks to the preservation of manuscripts in the monasteries of the Middle Ages). Traces of grandiose Roman architectural remains and fragments of ancient sculpture were still visible. This survival of the pagan past within the expanding world of Christianity led inevitably to a serious psychic conflict within the core of Western culture. That conflict was not to be finally resolved until the 17th century, when the Baroque style at last achieved a satisfactory answer.

In Florence, during the 15th century, some artists like Fra Angelico and Sebastiano Mainardi (Cat. No. 20) succeeded in keeping alive the Gothic sentiment and elegance of line that had characterized the work of the previous century. On the other hand, more forward-looking painters like Masaccio advanced along the lines laid down by Giotto, toward the solution of more "modern" problems—namely the correct rendering of anatomy, and the projection of three-dimensional figures in space.

In the Classical past, the arts of sculpture had been the most widely practiced. So, too, in the Renaissance, there were many artists who chose that medium. Even the painters, dominated by sculptural ideals, sought to create the illusion of plastic weight and volume on the flat painted surfaces of their walls and panels. Their forms, however, are modeled in such a way that they resemble those of relief sculpture rather than sculpture in the round.

The northern countries of Europe were slow to accept the full impact of these Renaissance innovations. In the south of France, during the 15th century, painting remained chiefly under the influence of the School of Avignon. A Sienese painter, Simone Martini, had gone to that city a century earlier, in the train of the popes. In the north of France, native painters were drawn to the tradition of the Van Eycks and their followers, to whom the invention and development of the Flemish oil technique is commonly attributed. That technique was to revolutionize painting throughout Europe.

With the help of the new medium, the Van Eycks had depicted (with microscopic fidelity) certain familiar facts of everyday existence, such as distant landscapes and bits of still life, to bring the holy figures into more intimate focus. Despite the fact that the persisting Gothic tradition laid greatest emphasis on the religious subject, the portrait also began to appear in the early 15th century, even in the North. From the beginning it was conceived in more realistic terms that were the more idealized versions of the Italian painter of the same period.

Later, the Flemish artist was to fuse the results of his minute observation of nature with the borrowed Italian principles of monumentality and idealization. As the influence of the Renaissance expanded further, he was to experiment with mythological figures, and, in his religious pictures, to give greater prominence to the landscape.

The Sixteenth Century

THREE supreme masters are responsible for the culmination of the first great phase of Italian painting in the early decades of the 16th century—a period known as the High Renaissance. Earliest to appear on the scene was Leonardo da Vinci (1452-1519), in whose rare works can be seen lingering traces of Gothic poetry and mysticism, which had been kept alive by certain painters of the 15th century such as Fra Angelico and Botticelli. Leonardo summed up these tendencies, contributing his own characteristic invention—a smoky modelling of forms which made them melt into the atmosphere of his mysterious landscapes. Raphael (1483-1520) perfected the classical purity of line and the exquisite sentiment of the Umbrian School. Michelangelo (1475-1564), living longer into the century than either of the others, created images of superb physical types, endowed with enormous muscular strength, and seemingly capable of powerful movement. In his art may be seen the final fruition of the scientific investigations made by 15th century Florentine painters who strove for more realistic interpretation of the human form under muscular stress and strain. The earlier goals of Italian painting were thus attained.

By the middle of the 16th century, lacking a new point of departure there remained no new direction for a painter to follow except to exaggerate these final and already perfected statements. As a result, many artists were caught in the blind alley into which they had been led by attempts to transcend the successful modes already formulated by the three High Renaissance masters. The sentiment of Raphael, the melting contours of Leonardo, and the titanic volumes of Michelangelo began to lose validity in the hands of such enthusiastic exaggerators. Indeed, Michelangelo himself, living until after the middle of the century, in his *Last Judgment* for the Sistine Chapel became one of the most obvious magnifiers of his own tendencies.

Toward the end of the century, escape from the artistic impasse was attempted in a solution offered by three members of the Carracci family—Lodovico, Agostino and Annibale—in Bologna. There they founded an academy where the great tenets of the High Renaissance might be preserved and handed on through their pupils. They standardized eclectic formulas, combining features of the styles of the three most important High Renaissance masters with a liberal borrowing from Correggio (1494-1534), who had made a comparable contribution to the School of Parma.

In general it may be said that the art of the Carracci was derivative, static and on the whole somewhat empty. It was correct rather than alive. On the other hand, certain innovations in Italian painting can be attributed to them and to their followers—notably the release of landscape as a possible subject for the painter.

The conflict between two opposing traditions—the surviving Gothic within the revived Classical—may be seen in the late 16th century style known as Mannerism. The serenity of the Renaissance concept is shattered by painters of this period, with the help of the Gothic weapons of nervous line and agitated movement. In their

pictures, attenuated and elegant figures pose, or even appear to dance—their graceful hands gesticulating or suavely motionless. These figures are often nymphs or great ladies. But even holy figures, when they appear, seem to be afflicted with the same fluttering instability. Only in Spain does El Greco, possibly the greatest of the Mannerists, evince an almost hysterical will to believe again with Gothic religious frenzy.

In France, these typical Mannerist tendencies are echoed in the paintings of the School of Fontainebleau. They can be studied at the Ringling Museum in both the *Banquet of Antony and Cleopatra* by Claude Vignon (Acc. No. 51.2) and the *Martyrdom of a Bishop Saint* by Monsu Desiderio (Acc. No. 50.1). Both of these somewhat late examples show their debt to the goldsmith's intricate art, one of the formative influences on Mannerism.

Even in the Low Countries, painters succumbed to what may be considered an expression of general uneasiness—outward indications of the struggle within the soul of Western culture. But the reconciliation of opposing elements, the resolution of the struggle, was to be effected in the next century. Then, at last, Baroque artists would fuse the Christian with the pagan, the monumental with the intimate, in one splendid dramatic whole. The new 17th century concept was to be embodied from the beginning in the work of the first great genius to appear after the High Renaissance—Michelangelo Merisi da Caravaggio.

The Seventeenth Century

THE 17th century saw the rise to fashion of the Baroque style. The style received its greatest impetus in those countries where the Counter-Reformation had brought a new vigor to Catholicism; but even in Protestant lands the energy and vitality of the movement gained considerable ground.

Most of the non-European world that we know was discovered in the 17th century. Voyages of exploration and conquest had extended the boundaries of space, and astronomers had begun to envisage the limitless regions of the universe. Inasmuch as all art mirrors the thought and experience of its own epoch, it was natural that the new consciousness of space should have its effect on sculpture, painting and architecture. Vast churches began to appear, and expanded wall surfaces demanded the attention of painters who could design on a larger scale than any known before.

The development of the theater with its elaborate settings is also reflected in various aspects of Baroque painting, for to the painters the world had become an exciting stage, people with millions of actors. The Baroque style achieved the resolution of the conflict that had existed since the Renaissance in the soul of Western culture—a conflict of which Mannerism had been the outward symptom. Christian and pagan concepts became fused, as did the opposites of pleasure and pain in the depictions of the holy martyrdoms. The Baroque style dramatized itself in bold contrasts of light and dark, in new devices for spotlighting figures, and in its constant

insistence on vistas of limitless space. It is romantic in the sense that it forces the serene and static classical elements to serve a dynamic and emotional purpose.

The Baroque imagination knew no bounds. It contributed in gigantic measure to every field of creative endeavor. We still draw upon its enormous treasure-house of ideas.

Michelangelo da Caravaggio was unquestionably the greatest single influence on the development of Baroque art. For almost a hundred years, his stylistic innovations colored the work of subsequent painters. As leader of the so-called Naturalist movement, he injected a new and realistic vigor into his painted characters, dramatizing them further by rich contrasts of light and shade and by isolating them against a dark background with a beam of light concentrated on them. His generally dark palette was imitated by generations of painters, who are called the *Tenebrosi* or Painters of Shadows. We may trace his influence on many of the 17th century masters in the Ringling Collection (Cf. Cat. Nos. 109, 110, 116).

The Baroque century saw the rise of a new type of patron-collector in the rich burgher, and the artist became no longer dependent exclusively on the Church or the Maecenas-banker, as in the Renaissance. That was especially true in Protestant Holland, where bourgeois tastes were satisfied with large numbers of pictures painted by the so-called Little Masters—pictures reflecting the neat interiors and exteriors of unpretentious burgher houses.

The homely familiar objects of daily living also attracted the artists of the Netherlands, who often specialized exclusively in the painting of still life (Cf. Nos. 234 and 289). The compact and intimate, flat landscape of Holland similarly served the landscape painters, who reflected the same taste for actuality (Cf. Cat. No. 274).

Adjacent Catholic Flanders, on the other hand, produced in Peter Paul Rubens one of the most typical of Baroque personalities. That extraordinarily productive master, admirably represented in the Ringling Collection (Cf. Cat. Nos. 211-224), drawing on a seemingly inexhaustible fund of imagination, decorated vast areas with his lavish brush.

The portrait can be said to have achieved its fullest development during the 17th century. In every country and every school, important contributions to the solution of this problem can be found. Hals and Rembrandt in Holland, Velasquez in Spain, Rubens and Van Dyck in Flanders, and innumerable portraitists in Italy and France perfected the typical formula of the full-length or half-length figure sumptuously clothed and theatrically posed against a rich background of columns and draperies. (Cf. Cat. Nos. 337 and 338.) So successful did this device become that its traditional acceptance was still reflected in the English portraits of the late 18th century (Cf. Cat. No. 387), as well as in American adaptations by Copley, Stuart and others.

When the 17th century came to a close, the titanic energies of the Baroque spirit had been lavishly manifested throughout Europe for a hundred years. In almost every country, vital schools of painting flourished, with the most enormous production of significant works of art the world has ever known. The next century, unfortunately, was to see a lessening of that glorious expenditure.

The Eighteenth Century

THE Rococo style prevalent during the first half of the 18th century descends directly from its 17th century progenitor, the Baroque. However, there are notable differences. Architecture, for example, turned its attention primarily to the decoration of interiors in structures already built. The period was the last to invent a new and significant ornament. Inspired by the shells and rock formations for which it is named, it was asymmetrical and intricate. Like some exotic plant, it fastened its roots to the architectural skeleton of the Baroque, embracing it in endless variety of luxuriant detail.

Painting revived the elegances of Mannerism on a smaller scale. The heroic Baroque figure composition was supplanted by the more intimate genre scene, in which numbers of smaller figures were introduced. Even the technique of painting itself took on a staccato nervousness, with pigment applied in little touches. The great development of the musical arts during the 18th century seemed to endow the visual arts with a new and tender delicacy. The influence of women was felt everywhere. Manners, dress and even political history reflected that civilizing factor.

The Rococo mind fused the natural with the bizarre. The importation of Chinese porcelains and other Oriental works of art into Europe further whetted the taste for exotic touches and for greater intimacy with those distant lands, now more and more a part of the European economic picture. Landscape began to be interpreted in poetic and fantastic ways.

By the middle of the 17th century, the Neapolitan painter, Salvator Rosa, had begun to prophesy the change in taste that was eventually to occur. His desolate landscapes are dramatized by lightning-struck trees, and groups of smugglers or brigands huddled together for protection from the violences of nature (Cf. Cat. Nos. 153 and 154).

Alessandro Magnasco and Giuseppe Maria Crespi, however, served as the main bridge between the 17th and 18th centuries. Crespi galvanized the late Bolognese academic tradition into new life by his reaction against its accepted standards, and paved the way for Giovanni Battista Tiepolo (Cf. Acc. No. 51.1). Magnasco invented exciting landscapes (Cf. Acc. No. 52.2) and macabre scenes, which are highly esteemed in our day. In general, both of these painters preferred to continue the dark palette of the Baroque masters, but in all else they reflect the new fashion. In France, a comparable transitional phenomenon can be observed in Jean Antoine Watteau, born in Flanders. In his painting, he translates the style of Rubens into the new 18th century terms of scale, color and subject matter.

There is often, in Rococo art, a feeling of improvisation that gives it a breathless and inspired quality. Furthermore, painting, sculpture and architecture fuse with each other to form a magnificent decorative amalgam. The delicate pastel hues of the rainbow disperse the dark shadows of the Baroque.

During the 18th century, Venice enjoyed a considerable revival of her ancient artistic prestige, and in Giovanni Battista Tiepolo she produced perhaps the greatest decorator of all time. Tiepolo, with a seemingly inexhaustible imagination still nur-

tured by the deep wells of Baroque practice, painted on ceilings and walls dramatically expressive figures, which appeared to float in an infinite universe (Cf. Cat. No. 184). By this time, the luminous range of pinks, blues, yellows and soft greens, characteristic of Rococo tonality, were to be seen everywhere. But nowhere is the true essence of the period more strikingly revealed than in the bravura of that master's drawings.

We have seen that landscape had begun to play an increasingly important role in the painting of the 18th century. Venice was also instrumental in widening the scope of that theme. Francesco Guardi, one of her most renowned painters, specialized in intimate views of the magic city, which were known to the Italians as *vedute*. These he romanticized with his luminous colors and almost musical brushstrokes. Canaletto (Cf. Cat. Nos. 186 and 187) also helped to create a vogue all over Europe for those pleasing subjects.

Nature was interpreted in various ways by the 18th century—poetically, dramatically and capriciously. It also served as accessory to the extraordinary perspectives of imagined architecture, as in the pictures of Giovanni Paolo Pannini (Cf. Cat. Nos. 171-173) and others.

Shortly after the middle of the century, however, another reaction set in. Once again, it took the form of a return to the Classical past, as did the Renaissance. The 18th century excavations in the ancient Roman city of Herculaneum (buried under lava for centuries) activated the modern science of archaeology. For the first time, man penetrated the veil that had obscured the more intimate aspects of the life and art of the past. Ancient wall paintings now played their part in inspiring the painter.

More and more, the Rococo style became a symbol of the frivolous life of the aristocrats. Two decades before the French Revolution put an end to both, Tiepolo, one of the Rococo's greatest interpreters, had died in Madrid. He was forgotten almost immediately because Raphael Anton Mengs (Cf. Cat. No. 328), abetted by the German archaeologist Winckelmann, had triumphantly preached the virtues of Neo-Classicism. However, the flickering torch of the Rococo, held aloft by Tiepolo, had kindled the genius of Goya, the last really great painter of Spain.

So the 18th century ended. It had nurtured the final coherent tradition of painting. Western civilization was not to see an equivalent manifestation, even up to our time.

INDEX

	PAGE
APOLLONIO DI GIOVANNI (?), <i>Battle Scene between Romans and Gauls</i>	6
BARTOLOMEO, FRA, <i>The Holy Family with the Infant St. John the Baptist</i> ..	8
BASSANO, FRANCESCO, <i>Christ Kneeling in the Garden of Gethsemane</i>	15
BEERT, OASIS THE ELDER (and RUBENS). <i>Pausias and Glycera</i>	35
BERNINI, GIAN LORENZO, <i>An Angel</i>	22
CANALETTO, ANTONIO, <i>View from the Piazzetta in Venice</i>	50
CORTONA, PIETRO DA, <i>Hagar in the Wilderness</i>	21
COSIMO, PIERO DI, <i>The Building of a Palace</i>	7
CRANACH, LUCAS THE ELDER, <i>Cardinal Albrecht as St. Jerome</i>	26
DESIDERIO, MONSU, <i>The Martyrdom of Saint Januarius</i>	25
FERRARI, GAUDENZIO, <i>The Holy Family with a Donor</i>	11
FYT, JAN, <i>The Calydonian Hunt</i>	36
GAINSBOROUGH, THOMAS, <i>Portrait of General Philip Honywood</i>	47
GRECO, EL, <i>Christ on the Cross</i>	38
HALS, FRANS, <i>Portrait of Pieter Olycan</i>	29
HEEM, JAN DE, <i>Still Life with Parrots</i>	32
ISENBRANT, ADRIAEN, <i>The Descent from the Cross</i>	27
JARDIN, KAREL DU, <i>Hager and Ishmael in the Wilderness</i>	31
MAGNASCO, ALESSANDRO, <i>A Stormy Sea</i>	20
MORONI, GIOVANNI BATTISTA, <i>Mario Benvenuti</i>	12
MURILLO, BARTOLOME ESTEBAN, <i>The Immaculate Conception</i>	40
NARDO, MARIOTTO DI, <i>The Virgin and Child Adored by Angels</i>	5
NATTIER, JEAN MARC, <i>Presumed Portrait of Louis XI</i>	47
PAGNI, BENEDETTO, <i>The Medici Madonna</i>	10
PANNINI, GIOVANNI PAOLO, <i>Circe Entertains Odysseus</i>	46
POUSSIN, NICOLAS, <i>The Ecstasy of St. Paul</i>	42
POUSSIN, NICOLAS, <i>The Holy Family</i>	43
PULIGO, DOMENICO, <i>The Virgin and Child Enthroned</i>	9

INDEX

	PAGE
RAEBURN, SIR HENRY, <i>The Sisters</i>	49
REGNIER, NICOLAS, <i>St. Matthew Writing the Gospel</i>	17
REMBRANDT VAN RIJN, <i>Portrait of a Lady</i>	28
RIBERA, JUSEPE, <i>The Madonna with the Child</i>	39
RIBERA, JUSEPE, (Follower of), <i>The Flaying of Marsyas</i>	24
ROSA, SALVATOR, <i>A Lake Surrounded by Rocky Mountains</i>	18
ROSA, SALVATOR, <i>Portrait of the Artist as Poet</i>	19
RUBENS, PETER PAUL, <i>The Four Cartoons</i>	3
RUBENS, PETER PAUL, <i>Departure of Lot and His Family</i>	33
RUBENS, PETER PAUL, <i>Portrait of the Archduke Ferdinand</i>	34
RUBENS, PETER PAUL (and BEERT), <i>Pausias and Glycera</i>	35
SASSOFERRATO, IL, <i>Portrait of an Unidentified Cardinal</i>	23
SNYDERS, FRANS, <i>Still Life with Game and a White Swan</i>	37
STEEN, JAN, <i>The Rape of the Sabine Women</i>	30
STROZZI, BERNARDO, <i>Giving Drink to the Thirsty</i>	16
TIEPOLO, GIOVANNI BATTISTA, <i>Two Allegorical Figures</i>	45
TINTORETTO, <i>St. Damian, After Michelangelo</i>	13
VELASQUEZ, DIEGO, <i>Philip IV, King of Spain</i>	41
VERONESE, IL, <i>The Rest on the Flight Into Egypt</i>	14

* * * *

PAINING IN THE FOURTEENTH CENTURY	51
PAINING IN THE FIFTEENTH CENTURY	52
PAINING IN THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY	54
PAINING IN THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY	55
PAINING IN THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY	57



University of
Connecticut
Libraries



39153020686855

